

The President's Daily Brief

June 2, 1976

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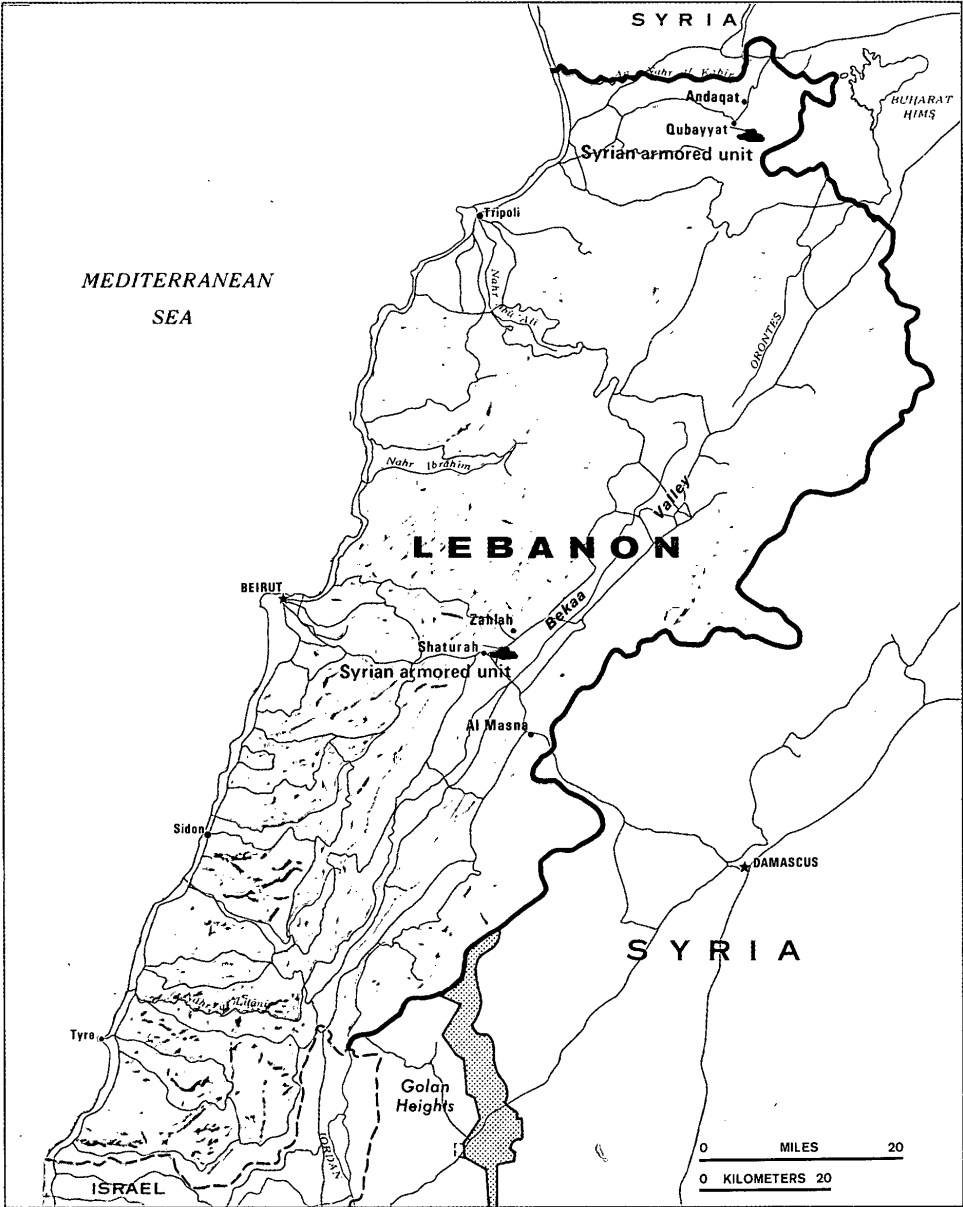
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LEBANON: *Syria's decision to send additional troops into Lebanon underscores Damascus' renewed determination to arrest the deterioration in Lebanese security and to ensure that president-elect Ilyas Sarkis is able to succeed President Franjiyah.*

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During the past two days, Syrian forces have moved into northern Lebanon near Qubayyat and Andaqat and into the central part of the country near Zahlah. [REDACTED] 25X1

[REDACTED] the number of Syrians involved in the current operation is at least several thousand. 25X1

At least one Syrian armored battalion entered northern Lebanon on Monday, and other Syrian units may have been sent into the area or moved up to the border inside Syria. Another Syrian armored unit, of at least battalion size, moved into central Lebanon yesterday as far as the main crossroad at Shaturah, a few miles west of Zahlah. Troops reportedly have spread out along the Beirut-Damascus highway and intend to open the roads in eastern Lebanon, lifting the leftist blockade of the Christian forces in Zahlah.

The Syrians' primary aim is to build up Syrian regular forces in Lebanon to smooth the transition of power from Franjiyah to Sarkis and to protect Syrian-directed mediation. Although the Syrians will want to assess fully the repercussions of their latest move, they are probably prepared to send in additional troops if necessary. If Syrian troops succeed in their reported intention to secure major access routes in eastern Lebanon, they could come into direct conflict with Arafat's Fatah forces, the largest of the fedayeen groups.

The Israeli government continues to maintain its low-key public attitude toward Syrian actions in Lebanon. Israeli defense ministry

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spokesmen yesterday said that Israel would not intervene in Lebanon as long as Syrian actions did not take the situation beyond the context of a civil war.

Although the statement had a warning tone, it seemed to reflect an Israeli view that Syria's latest move is intended to end the fighting in Lebanon and is not a prelude to massive military intervention that could threaten Israel's security. Syria's decision to renew the UN mandate in the Golan Heights last week almost certainly helped allay some of Israel's concern.

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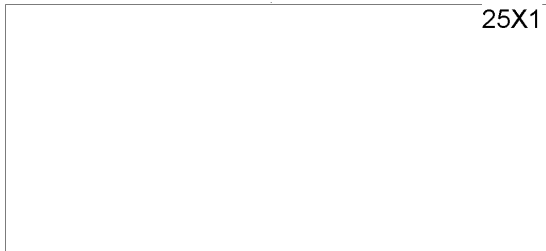
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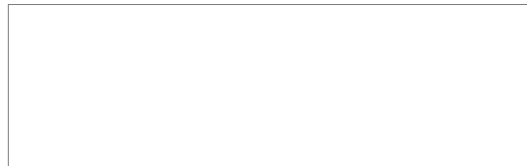
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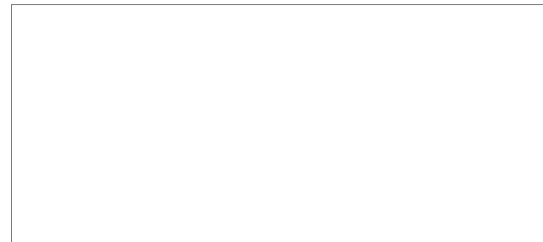
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YUGOSLAVIA: Belgrade is making it clear that unacceptable Soviet demands for conformity in the communist movement have caused the shelving of plans for a Tito-Brezhnev summit meeting and dimmed prospects that it will be held before fall.

Last Friday, two of Tito's top subordinates discussed the decline in Soviet-Yugoslav relations with British journalists. One said that, as far as he knew, "Brezhnev will not be coming." The other commented that relations with the USSR are approaching a "coolness" without precedent in recent years.

In a speech over the weekend, Tito finally added his personal contribution to Belgrade's current, three-month-long polemic against Soviet pressure tactics. Without citing the Soviets by name, he revived charges of external support for the cominformists and implicitly complained that Moscow's appeal to "proletarian internationalism" is in part an effort to undermine Yugoslavia's independence in foreign policy.

NOTES

Foreign Minister Phichai of Thailand yesterday publicly announced the cabinet decision not to allow unilateral US operations at the Ramasun intelligence collection facility in northeast Thailand.

The foreign minister said the government would take steps to have all US personnel stationed at Ramasun as well as the equipment at the site which cannot be operated by the Thai removed by the July 20 deadline.

Phichai affirmed that Bangkok would continue negotiations for the retention of other equipment which can be operated by Thai personnel and for additional US military supplies to enhance Thai capabilities. Phichai emphasized that the cabinet decision, based on recommendations of the National Security Council, had been unanimous.

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The visit of Saudi King Khalid to Iran last week left the Shah convinced that Riyadh will never fully cooperate with him in regional approaches to Persian Gulf security and other issues.

The Shah informed the US embassy on Monday that he is satisfied the Saudis are not deliberately working to undermine Iranian policy. He believes, however, that the Saudi establishment is not able to take the broad view or to embrace his advocacy of regional positions on problems.

The Shah certainly is not ready to abandon his efforts to secure closer cooperation among area governments. He may decide, however, to concentrate more on strengthening bilateral ties and on persuading Gulf rulers to accept the notion that Iran may act alone to police the Gulf.

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